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UNCLAS ANKARA 005172

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

EUR ALSO FOR DAS BRYZA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EPET](#) [ENRG](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [GG](#) [AZ](#) [BTC](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY VIEW ON BTC SECURITY AND CEYHAN INAUGURATION

REF: A. ANKARA 5080

[1](#)B. ANKARA 3171

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

[1](#)1. (SBU) BTC Inauguration at Ceyhan: MFA DDG Energy Mithat Rende told Econ Counselor on September 2 that the GOT expected the BTC first oil tanker loading at Ceyhan to be scheduled for either mid December or March. He said that BP's current forecast for BTC completion estimated end of December with risk of slippage if there were further delays in wrapping things up in Turkey. Rende said that the MFA strongly opposed a "fake" ceremony; that is, using oil from tanker early commissioning, rather than oil that has in fact traversed the pipeline. (Note: per Ref A the GOT Ministry of Energy still plans for post-Ramadan November 10, which appears disconnected from construction reality for a "real" ceremony. The GOT has sought to nail down a date to facilitate high level visitors. If first oil slipped past the new year, MFA appears to support aiming for better weather in March for the inauguration. End Note.) In a separate conversation with EnergyOff, BP confirmed the project timing, offering "odds on chance" of first oil before year-end. The BP rep said that operation of only two of Turkey's four pump stations would be necessary for the initial start-up with reduced flow. He noted that the latest delay was due to difficulties in completing the electronic and communication connections between Turkey pump stations and the Ceyhan control room. Finally, the BP rep said that the first tanker from Supsa is scheduled to dock at Ceyhan on September 8 to fill up one tank for testing and pre-commission.

[1](#)2. (SBU) BTC Security: The next step in arranging three-country security coordination and information mechanisms under the BTC Security Protocol is the convening of the Joint Committee on Security in Ankara (Ref B). According to Rende, the Georgians (heretofore slow in naming representatives) had agreed to September 5 (announced in the press), but unfortunately the Azeris said they could not meet on this date. Rende said that the mutually satisfactory date remained to be determined. He was sorry that he would not be able to attend the EUCOM Caspian Energy Security Conference in Garmisch September 26-28, but he said there would be good representation from GOT MFA, MENR, and BOTAS to discuss BTC security and other issues.

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